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Docket No. PNDF-01221

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1-3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) The optical fiber tape according to claim-2 7, further comprising a protective tube covering the position on the tape fiber in which said plurality of optical fibers is separated into the predetermined number of optical fiber groups.

5. (Withdrawn) The optical fiber tape according to claim-3 21, further comprising a protective tube covering the position at which said plurality of optical fibers is arranged parallel to one another.

6. (Previously presented) The optical fiber tape according to claim 4, wherein the protective tube is fixed to the optical fibers at the fixation section or a position near the fixation section.

7. (Currently amended) An ~~The~~ optical fiber tape, according to claim-2, further comprising:

a fiber array adapted to be connected to an optical waveguide;

a fixation section;

a tape fiber including a plurality of tape sections, each tape section produced by aligning a plurality of optical fibers and forming the aligned optical fibers into a tape section, said tape sections being fixed to the fiber array, said plurality of optical fibers, at a position

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between the fiber array and the fixation section, being separated into a predetermined number of optical fiber groups which is smaller in number than the number of said plurality of optical fibers, said groups being fixed to the fixation section; and

_____ a rearrangement section for rearranging the optical fibers, said rearrangement section being located at the fixation section or a position near the fixation section.

8. (Currently amended) The optical fiber tape according to claim 4, further comprising:

~~_____ a rearrangement section for rearranging the optical fibers, said rearrangement section being located at the fixation section or a position near the fixation section, and~~

a case containing the rearrangement section, with one end of the protective tube fixed to one end of the case.

9. (Currently amended) The optical fiber tape according to claim 4, further comprising:

~~_____ a rearrangement section, for rearranging the optical fibers, said rearrangement section being located at the fixation section or a position near the fixation section, and~~

a case containing the rearrangement section, with one end of the protective tube fixed within the case.

10. (Withdrawn) The optical fiber tape according to claim ~~3~~ 21, wherein said plurality of optical fibers are arranged in a plurality of columns having a plurality of stages.

11. (Withdrawn) The optical fiber tape according to claim 10, wherein the number of

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columns is 2 and the number of stages is 2.

12. (Previously presented) The optical fiber tape according to claim 4, wherein one end of the protective tube is fixed.

13. (Previously presented) The optical fiber tape according to claim 4, wherein the protective tube is fixed to optical fibers in the position where the plurality of optical fibers are separated.

14. (Withdrawn) The optical fiber tape according to claim 5, wherein, in the position at which said plurality of optical fibers are arranged parallel to one another and are formed into a tape, the protective tube is fixed to the optical fiber tape.

15. (Previously presented) The optical fiber tape according to claim 7, wherein the order of arrangement of the optical fibers on an end of the rearrangement section remote from the fiber array is identical to the order of arrangement of the optical fibers in the fiber array.

16. (Previously presented) The optical fiber tape according to claim 4, wherein the protective tube is formed of a flame-retardant material.

17. (Previously presented) The optical fiber tape according to claim 4, wherein the protective tube is fixed to the fiber array adjacent the fixation section.

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18. (Currently amended) The optical fiber tape according to claim ~~2~~ 7, wherein the pitch of the optical fibers in the fiber array is half of the pitch of the separated optical fibers at the position in the tape fiber between the fiber array and the fixation section.

19-20. (Canceled)

21. (Withdrawn) ~~An The~~ optical fiber tape, according to claim ~~3~~, further comprising:
a fiber array adapted to be connected to an optical waveguide;
a fixation section;
a tape fiber including a plurality of tape sections, each tape section produced by aligning a plurality of optical fibers and forming the aligned optical fibers into a tape section, said tape sections being fixed to the fiber array, said plurality of optical fibers, at a position between the fiber array and the fixation section, being separated and arranged parallel to one another and being formed into a tape, said tape being fixed to the fixation section; and
a rearrangement section for rearranging the optical fibers, said rearrangement section being located at the fixation section or a position near the fixation section.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Withdrawn) The optical fiber tape according to claim ~~3~~ 21, wherein the pitch of the optical fibers in the fiber array is half of the pitch of the parallel optical fibers at the position

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in the tape fiber between the fiber array and the fixation section.

24. (Currently amended) An optical fiber tape, comprising:
- a fiber array adapted to be connected to an optical waveguide;
 - a fixation section; and
 - a tape fiber including a plurality of tape sections, each tape section comprising a plurality of optical fibers, said tape sections being fixed to the fiber array, said plurality of optical fibers being separated at a position between the fiber array and the fixation section and being fixed to the fixation section; and
 - a rearrangement section for rearranging the optical fibers, said rearrangement section being located at the fixation section or a position near the fixation section.
25. (Previously presented) The optical fiber tape according to claim 8, wherein the order of arrangement of the optical fibers on an end of the rearrangement section remote from the fiber array is identical to the order of arrangement of the optical fibers in the fiber array.
26. (Previously presented) The optical fiber tape according to claim 9, wherein the order of arrangement of the optical fibers on an end of the rearrangement section remote from the fiber array is identical to the order of arrangement of the optical fibers in the fiber array.
27. (Withdrawn) The optical fiber tape according to claim 5, wherein the protective tube comprises a flame-retardant material.

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